

Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee Meeting: 04/26/2021*

*Convened virtually with call-in information due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in accordance with flexibilities enacted by Act 92 of 2020.

Committee Members Present

✓	Jessa Barnard	✓	Yacouba Jacob Bogle		Kelly Dougherty
✓	Lisa Draper	✓	Mike Fisher	✓	Devon Green
✓	Dale Hackett	✓	Rebecca Heintz	✓	Sharon Henault
✓	Zachary Hozid	✓	Gladys Konstantin	✓	Helen Labun
✓	Joan Lavoie	✓	Erin Maguire	✓	Kirsten Murphy
✓	Jamie Rainville	✓	John Schultz	✓	Sarah Teel
✓	Julie Tessler	✓	Jason Williams		

Other Attendees Present

✓	Cory Gustafson	✓	Adaline Strumolo	✓	Sandi Hoffman
✓	Nissa James	✓	Zachary Goss	✓	Sean Sheehan
✓	Shannon Mead	✓	Victoria Jarvis	✓	Shayla Livingston
✓	Scott Cerreta	✓	Bard Hill	✓	Corey Atanda
✓	Sarah Peterson	✓	Betty Morse	✓	Brendan Hogan
✓	Kelsey Thornton	✓	Bill Baylor	✓	Lucie Garand
✓	Taylor Morrow				

Agenda

- **Supporting Documents:** Posted to the folder for agendas and materials on [Advisory Committee's new webpage](#) and may also be found directly here:
[Advisory Committee 4 26 21 Agenda.pdf](#)
[Advisory Committee PPT 4 26 2021.pdf](#)
- **Convene**
Erin Maguire, Co-Chair, chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order.
- **Roll Call, Approval of Minutes, and Quorum**
Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA) completed the roll call, and determined a quorum was present. The motion to approve the March 2021 meeting minutes was made, seconded, the Chair stated the question to approve the March 2021 meeting meetings to the Committee, and upon no discussion, the Chair put the motion to a vote. The March 2021

meeting minutes were approved.

- **Membership Update**

Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA), reviewed the current statutory requirement for Advisory Committee membership and reviewed the current membership composition. The Health Care Training and Communication Manager also reviewed the Committee's decision to nominate and vote on co-chair positions on an annual basis. The Committee discussed the potential of having the co-chairs serve two-year staggered terms for the purpose of continuity. The Committee will move forward with annual co-chair terms. Nominations must be submitted to the Health Care Training and Communication Manager by May 15, 2021. A vote will be held virtually prior to the May Advisory Committee meeting.

For more information, please see Advisory Committee PPT 4_26_2021.pdf slide 3-7.

- **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Health Care Provisions Overview**

Nissa James, Health Care Director (DVHA), provided an overview of the health care provisions within the American Rescue Plan Act as delivered by Ena Backus, Director of Health Care Reform (AHS) to the Vermont Legislature's House Committee on Health Care on April 1, 2021. This presentation included the provisions and associated impacts that ARPA will have on State of Vermont programs, including Medicaid, over approximately the next six years.

- The Office of the Health Care Advocate wished to express support for the option offered under the American Rescue Plan Act for state Medicaid programs to extend eligibility for pregnant people for 12 months postpartum. (This provision does not take effect for one year after the bill's enactment so the State of Vermont has not completed its policy analysis on this option.)
- There was a question from a Committee member whether information had been released that indicates if additional "booster shots" of the COVID-19 vaccine may be needed and if they are effective against the variants. DVHA indicated that clinical guidance on that topic (i.e., beyond the current complete COVID-19 vaccination series) had not been released to date.

For more information, please see Advisory Committee PPT 4_26_2021.pdf slide 8-19.

- **American Rescue Plan Act and Vermont's Health Insurance Marketplace: Impact for Vermonters and DVHA**

Sean Sheehan, Senior Policy and Implementation Analyst (DVHA), reviewed how the changes under the American Rescue Plan Act will impact health insurance, including more generous premium tax credits and expanded tax credit eligibility for most Vermonters enrolled through the State's health insurance marketplace. DVHA's Senior Policy and Implementation Analyst also reviewed DVHA's work to date to support implementation of these changes, the key milestones, status, and timing.

- Committee discussion included whether the State is considering extending its current Special Enrollment Period; the State indicated that is being considered and an announcement should be forthcoming soon. There was also discussion regarding the American Rescue Plan Act impact on

health insurance affordability for people receiving unemployment insurance in 2021, the time-limited nature of the premium tax credit changes (2021 and 2022 only), and the impact for employers (they will need to determine if they still offer employer-sponsored insurance).

- The Co-Chair recognized the complexity of the federal changes, and summarized the main points as follows:
 - 1). The premium tax credit changes do not affect Medicare or Medicaid.
 - 2). In order for people to be eligible to receive premium tax credits, they must enroll in health insurance through Vermont's health insurance marketplace (also known as the health insurance exchange).
 - 3). People with an offer of affordable health insurance from their employer are not eligible to enroll in health insurance through the State's health insurance marketplace.
- The Committee began a discussion of a set of guiding principles that could be used in the development of accessible communications by DVHA's staff to ensure communications, education, and outreach around the American Rescue Plan Act changes and the upcoming transition for premium payments for those enrolled through the State's health insurance marketplace are easily understood, effective, and well-received by recipients.

For more information, please see Advisory Committee PPT 4_26_2021.pdf slide 20-29.

- **Commissioner's Update**

Cory Gustafson, Commissioner of the Department of Vermont Health Access, provided an update on the budget impact associated with increased caseload and increased utilization as people begin to access health care services again, the work of the Department in supporting COVID-19 vaccination efforts, and the expected end of the current legislative session (mid- to late-May).

- **Public Comment**

No public comment was offered.

- **Final Committee Discussion**

No final Committee discussion was offered.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 PM.

Additional about the Department's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency may be located here: [https://dvha.vermont.gov/covid-19,including the newest update:](https://dvha.vermont.gov/covid-19,including%20the%20newest%20update)

[Vermont has enough COVID-19 vaccine appointments for everyone who is eligible. Visit the Vermont Department of Health website for more information and to make an appointment online. Or call 1-855-722-7878 to make an appointment by telephone and have your questions answered.](#)